



The Sonnets

Sandra Simonds

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On the 50th anniversary of Ted Berrigan's and the 25th anniversary of Bernadette Mayer's, Bloof Books is thrilled to publish THE SONNETS by Sandra Simonds. As Simonds has written, "There's no consensus on how to do it. Does it have to have a traditional rhyme scheme? Does it need to be written in iambic pentameter? Does it have to be about unrequited love? Does it even need to be fourteen lines? Ask twenty poets these questions, and you'll get two-hundred answers. And simply calling a sonnet a sonnet doesn't really make it a sonnet." THE SONNETS is this poet's exploration of the tradition, as well her testing of the (probably apocryphal) remark made by William Carlos Williams that it's a "fascist form." As for the classic theme of love: "It's easy for me to fool myself into thinking that I'm in love so sometimes I get all tangled up in love triangles, squares and octagons," Simonds explains. "Maybe it's a poet's disease.... In real life relationships people are always vying for power but in the sonnet, it's the poet and the sonnet that are in a struggle to the death. The problem is that the poet is at a huge disadvantage because the sonnet has the history OF THE SONNET on its side and almost always wins." Each of the sonnets here indeed has fourteen lines (and each section fourteen sonnets). Some of the poems rhyme. Most do talk of love, as it burgeons and fades. But as always with Simonds's work, the reader should come to THE SONNETS expecting to be upended. Sandra Simonds is the author of two previous collections of poetry, Warsaw Bikini (Bloof Books, 2008) and Mother Was a Tragic Girl (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2012). Her poems have appeared in The Best American Poetry 2014, the American Poetry Review, Fence, Poetry, and other journals.

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